7/8/72

Dear Howard,

This is for your information only. And it serves as a note for me.

Robert called me about 2:30 this p.m. or less than 45 minutes ago. He appears disturbed by this mess. Yes, blabbermouth Jerry has been talking to him about it. By phone. Jerry has time for everything except real responsibilities. How often I don't know, but I gather not just one phone call.

Robert doesn't understand what is up, but from Jerry's own account he fears it is wrong. He describes Jerry as disturbed at the reaction but not the fact. He was acting, in Robert's representation of what Jerry told him, in everyone's interest, including mine. I can imagine the justifications and feedbacks this can now include.

Robert is afraid that the mere writing of that piece on the NYTimes has gone to Jerry's head more than we imagine. Someone else once suggested this, before all this happened. Was it you? Was somebody quoting Sylvia? I don't recall, except that the idea is not new with Robert. Robert can form this impression from his personal relations with Jerry only.

I don't know the reason for Robert's call. I don't think he can afford it. He seemed to be concerned about us, so I guess that was his purpose. If it is, then it is also clear that he feels Jerry is full of effluvia in what he says to Robert. To this moment, remember, Robert knows only what Jerry has told him.

I told Robert there were but two people with whom Jerry could have consulted who could have had the knowledge required for a judgement, you and I, nd that he had consulted neither. I did not hide my personal views of all those involved.

Robert had never heard Ned's name. Doesn't yet know who he is.

For whatever reason, he seems satisfied that Jerry is ego-tripping and doesn't realize it.

Which reminds me: I called Walter about something the other day and caught him just as he was leaving his office. I told him, briefly, the purpose of my call and then asked him how his lunch with Jerry was. Walter then told me that Jerry had brought this subject up and had talked of nothing else. That's all I know, nothing of the substance or specifics. Interesting psychological manifestation. Think they lunched Tuesday. I am certain Walter is taking time for Jerry only because he considered Jerry my friend. I told him I no longer consider Jerry this and asked him to ask Jerry to get my foundations file back and to give it to him to get to me. Jerry has not responded to this.

He seems to have been unmoved by your letter, too.

As of today I have heard nothing of which you do not know from any of the principals and except for Mary, I have been in touch with no others. Not even Hoch, from whom I got a letter yesterday I have to read and answer.

If you got from Sylvia a copy of her letter to me, I'd like you to read it with care and ask yourself how she could have known some of its contents. It is not by accident that I am not telling you what. She did not ask that it be confidential, but I have sent no copies for a variety of reasons, one being her reference to taking amphetimines. The death of the doctor who prescribed them and her running out seems to have coincided with her receipt of my letter and her reaction seems to have preceeded her opening of my letter.

Probably I should have made notes on Robert's call while we were speaking but I didn't. As soon as I finished what was in the typewriter I did this. Now that it is not raining I must mow some grass, as I did as long as I could this a.m.

I hope you are putting your head together on this. Don't let it get to you. There is nothing you can do that can hurt anyone but yourself, so I still encourage you to think of whatever you think of from this perspective. And as of today's mail, the last thing I got from you I answered and mailed the answer promptly. It was the letterin which you asked questions about some of the things I have said. I think ref to the Epilogue WWII will cue you. It is the one I said seemed delayed from its date.

Best,